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## **New rules effective Dec.1 for displays, exhibits at state capitol**

**OLYMPIA** – Beginning Dec. 1, new rules take effect for the permitting of displays and exhibits in public areas of the state capitol.

The Department of General Administration adopted the new rules Oct. 30. Under state law, the rules take effect 31 days later – Dec. 1. The department is responsible for managing and maintaining the capitol grounds and buildings.

General Administration began developing the new rules last July to clarify how the department would evaluate and approve requests for use of the public areas of the capitol grounds and buildings. The department received several hundred public comments about the proposal, including many at a public hearing in September.

All comments were considered in making 12 modifications to the original proposal.

A key aspect of the new rules is that only government-sponsored exhibits and displays are allowed inside public areas of campus buildings.

Private exhibits and displays are allowed only on the campus grounds, provided they meet certain conditions regarding time, place and manner.

Other key elements of the new rules that take effect December 1, 2009:

- No permit is necessary for free speech and assembly activities involving fewer than 25 people inside a building, or fewer than 75 people on the grounds.
- Activity sponsors must apply to General Administration for a permit at least two working days before the planned date of the activity. Weekends and holidays are not considered working days.
- General Administration will process permit applications on a first-come, first-served basis.
- There is no fee for a permit for free speech and assembly activities.
- Applications may be submitted up to a year in advance of the planned activity.
- General Administration will approve or deny an application within two working days from the date of receipt.

General Administration is now crafting new procedures and guidelines for processing applications for activities at the capitol. Permit applications received between Oct. 30 and Nov. 30 will be considered under the existing policy until the new rules take effect. Dec. 1.

More information about new rules is available at:

- [www.ga.wa.gov/Rules/rules\\_adopted.htm](http://www.ga.wa.gov/Rules/rules_adopted.htm)

General Administration maintains the state capitol and all of its memorials and artworks. The department also performs planning for the campus, and provides tours and other services to more than 300,000 visitors annually.

- **Visit the Capitol:** [www.ga.wa.gov/Visitor/index.html](http://www.ga.wa.gov/Visitor/index.html)
- **General Administration:** [www.ga.wa.gov](http://www.ga.wa.gov)